



Power Pulse!

A quarterly newsletter featuring the latest news and information from the Illinois Power Agency.



Our vision is to provide a clean, reliable, equitable, and cost-effective energy future for residents and businesses across Illinois.

Attention mobile users: For best experience, rotate device to landscape mode.

Upcoming Feedback Opportunities for Stakeholders

Much of the IPA's work is outlined through "procurement plans" published for public comment and then filed for approval with the Illinois Commerce Commission. This year, the IPA is statutorily required to publish drafts of two important procurement plans by August 15:

2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan (or Long-Term Plan), which is

Illinois Power Agency Expands Energy Workforce Equity Portal



developed and published every two-years. The Long-Term Plan details the goals and strategies for the IPA's renewable energy programs and procurements.

2024 Annual Electricity

Procurement Plan, which is developed and published every year. The Electricity Procurement Plan provides a roadmap for the IPA's approach to meet the electricity supply needs of residential and small commercial customers taking fixed price service from Illinois electric utilities.

Any parties seeking to provide comment on the Agency's draft plans are encouraged to review these plans and submit written feedback. More information and guidance, including information on public hearings held in conjunction with these plans and how to submit comments, will be available on the [announcements page](#) of the IPA website upon the draft plans' publishing on August 15.

Illinois Solar for All Launches New Residential Solar Initiatives

The Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) Program is excited to announce two new pilot initiatives for the 2023-24 program year.

The Residential Solar Pilot Initiative, Bright Neighborhoods, launched on August 1, offers income-eligible residents in three Illinois communities the opportunity to access affordable solar installations through ILSFA. This initiative will test and evaluate ways to improve participation levels in three areas: West Garfield Park in Chicago, the city of Waukegan, and the Carbondale-Marion Micropolitan Statistical Area, all of which have high numbers of income-eligible households, but low participation rates in ILSFA. The Pilot has a goal of 50-100 total installations within each of the three communities.

The Residential Solar Pilot initiative was established through the IPA's 2022 Long-

The IPA has expanded the Energy Workforce Equity Portal and updated the portal flyer to help facilitate more meaningful participation of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) in the clean energy economy.

The Portal, which was launched on January 31, now features skills-development training programs that can help both EEPs and non-EEPs build the knowledge and skills needed to enter the clean energy workforce. The IPA does not administer these training programs. However, by recognizing the need for this information and related resources in the Portal, the IPA continues its mission to strengthen and advance equity in the clean energy industry.

As part of the IPA's education and outreach efforts, the IPA has translated the portal flyer into Spanish for EEPs who have limited English proficiency. By translating outreach documents into Spanish, the hopes to remove language access barriers for EEPs. In addition, the IPA has incorporated a QR code into the portal flyer to make it more interactive and engaging. Users can scan the QR code with the camera of a mobile device, gaining easy access to the Portal website, energyequity.illinois.gov.

Users can find the additional education and training resources, along with the [updated Portal Flyer](#), through the [resources page](#) of the Portal.

Illinois Commerce Commission Approves Results of Indexed REC Procurement Event

Term Plan and seeks to ease and encourage participation in ILSFA by utilizing the ILSFA Program Administrator to help find income-eligible households to participate in select communities. Under this initiative, the ILSFA Program Administrator will manage marketing, public outreach, participant interactions, income verification, and an initial site suitability assessment. The Residential Solar Pilot Initiative aims to reduce barriers to participation and increase access for income-eligible households to the Residential Solar sub-program within ILSFA. A limited-time initiative, Bright Neighborhoods is available for enrollment until November 2023. To learn more, visit the [Bright Neighborhoods webpage](#) of the ILSFA website.

In addition, ILSFA has also recently launched the Home Repairs and Upgrades Pilot, intended to improve participation in the Residential Solar (Small) subprogram by offering incentives that help address home repair costs, which can be a barrier for small residential customers hosting solar panels. The Pilot is expected to serve 100-125 projects. To learn more, visit the [Residential Solar webpage](#) of the ILSFA website.



On June 29, the Illinois Commerce Commission **approved results** of the IPA's Indexed REC procurement event for Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from utility-scale solar, utility-scale wind, and brownfield site photovoltaic projects. The selected utility-scale solar and brownfield site photovoltaic projects will constitute 577.75 megawatts ("MW") of new solar energy generation. No winning wind projects were selected, and the IPA will hold another indexed REC procurement event this fall.

By law, participating utility-scale projects must be at least 5 MW in size, be located in Illinois—or meet a set of public interest criteria if located in an adjacent state, as outlined in Chapter 4 of [the IPA's 2022 Long-Term Plan](#)—and fulfill project maturity requirements.

Illinois Power Agency Launches New Website for Illinois Shines

On July 27, the Illinois Power Agency launched a [new website for Illinois Shines](#). A centerpiece of the Illinois Shines brand refresh that began in April, the new site combines, transforms, and expands information previously available at the Program's two public websites. The new website replaces IllinoisABP.com and IllinoisShines.com, combining both into a singular site for all users. Created with user experience in mind, the new website includes resource-rich information and education materials that better serve stakeholders, prospective and current solar customers, and existing and potential solar developers and installers.

Some features of the new website include:

- Consumer and vendor content in one site, separated by different menu bars, offering distinct content of importance for each audience, while providing transparency on Program communications and materials. The new menu bars are also designed to help users find the information more intuitively and efficiently.
- Greater content organization and explanatory information to better guide prospective Illinois Shines customers through an understanding of solar basics and Illinois Shines, including incentives, project types, and financing options.
- Use of page “hubs” to support more specific information-sharing and understanding on key areas including consumer protection, the Program’s six project categories, shorter Program announcements, and more.
- Dynamic consumer content including a user-driven Disclosure Form “Deep Dive” tool to increase consumer understanding of Program requirements, and an interactive Project Map.
- Equity Accountability System page which includes information on equity requirements and Minimum Equity Standard compliance.
- Introduction of ADA-accessible versions of Program brochures, with additional accessible content to be added.

Users encountering a problematic link or redirect, or who have questions, are encouraged to contact the Illinois Shines Program Administrator at admin@illinoisshines.com

To view the new website, please visit www.IllinoisShines.com

Did You Know?

Did you know the IPA Consumer Protection Working Group engages a diverse set of stakeholders for a robust discussion of consumer protection issues? The Working Group allows consumers, solar companies, community and nonprofit organizations, and other members of the public to directly provide their insight and perspectives that will help inform our strategies and decisions on a variety of consumer protection issues. To participate and receive information about the working group and future meetings, sign up using [this link](#).



External Events Featuring IPA Speakers

Illinois Climate Bank Listening Session

On July 6, ILSFA Senior Program Manager Jennifer Schmidt provided a high-level overview of the program at the Illinois Finance Authority's (IFA) Illinois Climate Bank listening session. This listening session presented the public with an overview of EPA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund's (GGRF) and an opportunity for Illinois to apply for GGRF's solar for all funding. IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy and ILSFA Senior Program Manager Jennifer Schmidt will meet weekly with the IFA and other partners on the application. To learn more, visit Illinois Finance Authority's [**Illinois Climate Bank page**](#).

National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition Annual Conference

On July 13, ILSFA Senior Program Manager Jennifer Schmidt participated in the Equitable Access to Community Solar: Extending the Benefits to LIHEAP Recipients panel at the National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) Annual Conference.

The panel highlighted the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Community Solar Partnership with key pilot states, including Illinois, to develop and design a digital tool that connects Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) participants with community solar projects in states with existing low-income community solar programs. The panelists at the event discussed how their states are rolling out community solar programs that provide significant electricity bill savings to LMI customers. In addition, the panel shed light on the importance of collaboration and coordination between state and federal governments and community-based organizations to address common challenges and offer solutions to streamline information to increase low-income household access to community solar.

To learn more about the National Community Solar Partnership and the Connector tool that connects LIHEAP participants with community solar projects in states with existing low-income community solar programs, watch the latest IPA Power Hour Webinar: [***Unpacking Community Solar Within ILSFA***](#).

OMS Resource Adequacy Summit 2.0



IPA Acting Director **Brian Granahan** (left) and Legal Fellow **Rachael Bruketta** attend the OMS Resource Adequacy Summit 2.0 in St. Louis, Missouri.



IPA Acting Director **Brian Granahan** presents on a State & Utility Planning Processes panel at the OMS Resource Adequacy Summit 2.0 in St. Louis, Missouri.

On May 15-16, IPA Acting Director Brian Granahan and Legal Fellow Rachael Bruketta attended the Organization of MISO States (OMS) Resource Adequacy Summit 2.0 in St. Louis, Missouri. During the Summit, Brian joined other speakers from states and utilities within MISO territory on a State & Utility Planning Processes panel. During the panel discussion, he provided a presentation about the IPA's electricity supply procurement planning used to procure block energy supply for "eligible retail customers" (residential and small commercial customers of Illinois electric utilities who have not chosen service from an alternate supplier).

CESA and the State-Federal Summit

On May 15-18, IPA's Chief of Planning and Procurement Anthony Star, Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy, Program Associate Emily Asbury, and Associate Economist Hannah McCorry attended the Annual Meeting of the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) and the State-Federal Summit: Advancing Toward 100% Clean Energy in Washington, D.C.

IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy moderated a panel at the State-Federal summit hosted by CESA, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and Berkeley Lab. Panelists discussed the use of data collection to ease the energy burden for low and moderate-income communities.

The IPA joined 17 other state governments for the CESA Annual Meeting, where states shared best practices, discussed potential solutions to common challenges, and heard from technical experts and federal agencies. At the State-Federal Summit, an additional 9 states and representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and several National Laboratories joined to learn how the Federal government can support state action on clean energy and how states can facilitate effective implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act.

In the Community

On June 21, IPA DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew attended the



DEI Outreach Associate **Kina Askew** (left) talks about the IPA at a regional CEJA event on Chicago's Southside.

South Suburban Jobs Fair in Chicago Heights, IL. During the event, Kina provided a walkthrough of the equity portal and discussed how the portal aims to connect clean energy companies with Equity Eligible job seekers looking for jobs in the clean energy industry.



Illinois Solar for All Program Associate **Abigail Ramirez** (left) and IPA DEI Outreach Associate **Kina Askew** join the Near West American Job Center's Careers De Mayo Fair on May 24.

On May 24, Illinois Solar for All Program Associate Abigail Ramirez and IPA DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew joined the Near West American Job Center's Careers De Mayo Fair. During the event, Abigail discussed how ILSFA provides benefits of solar and the renewable energy economy to income-eligible and environmental justice communities across Illinois.

Power Hour Recap

IPA Power Hour 6: Unpacking Community Solar Within Illinois Solar for All



On July 28, the IPA hosted *Unpacking Community Solar Within ILSFA*, the latest webinar in the IPA's Power Hour Series. This webinar highlighted how CEJA has broadened the focus of ILSFA's community solar sub-program through community ownership and energy sovereignty. In addition, the webinar discussed the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Community Solar Partnership with the State of Illinois to design a portal connecting Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program participants with the ILSFA's community solar program. The speakers for the webinar included Jennifer Schmidt, Program Manager for Illinois Solar for All; Ariel Drehobl, Program Analyst, Workforce and Equitable Access Team at DOE; and Mindy Browning, Energy Assistance Coordinator at the Embarras River Basin Agency, Inc. in Greenup, Illinois.

IPA Power Hour 5: The Impacts of Wind and Solar Projects on the Local Economy

IPA Power Hour 4: From Brownfield to Brightfield: The Impact of Brownfield Redevelopment on Communities

The Illinois Power Agency



On June 30, the IPA hosted "*The Impacts of Wind and Solar Projects on the Local Economy.*" The webinar provided an overview on renewable energy development in Illinois and discussed economic impacts of historical wind and solar projects including jobs, earnings, and output. Lastly, the webinar highlighted an interesting case study on how a landfill community solar project in the City of Urbana brought economic advantages to its community.

The speakers for the webinar included Dr. David Loomis, Executive Director of the Institute for Regulatory Policy Studies at Illinois State University; Anthony Star, Senior Advisor and Interim Bureau Chief of Planning and Procurement at the Illinois Power Agency; and Scott Tess, Sustainability and Resilience Officer for the City of Urbana, Illinois.

To access recordings and presentations of past Power Hour webinars, visit the [Events](#) page of the IPA website.



On May 26, the IPA hosted "*From Brownfield to Brightfield: The Impact of Brownfield Redevelopment on Communities.*" The webinar highlighted community benefits of brownfield redevelopment, as well as the challenges and incentives associated with it. Speakers for this webinar explored photovoltaic procurements for Illinois brownfield sites, using some case studies of brownfield projects across the state.

The speakers for the webinar included Greg Dunn, Deputy Chief of the Bureau of Land at the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; Anthony Star, Senior Advisor and Interim Planning and Procurement Bureau Chief of the Illinois Power Agency; Val Stori, Senior Program Manager (Renewable Energy) at the Great Plains Institute; and Brian Ross, Vice President (Renewable Energy) at the Great Plains Institute.

IPA in the News

Utility Dive: [Collecting data to support energy-burdened communities poses unique challenges, experts say](#)

Energy News Network: [With reboot, Illinois hopes for more orderly solar incentive rollout](#)

WAND-TV: [IL Solar program grows & adds new hiring rules](#)

IPA Staff Spotlight



Georgina White

On June 1, Georgina White joined the IPA as Deputy Director. In this role, she will oversee administrative, finance, human resources, and related functions. Georgina previously served as the Illinois Department of Transportation's Chief of Staff, where she served as the primary advisor to the Secretary of Transportation on all fiscal, budgetary, and administrative matters. Georgina had previously served in the IPA from 2012-2014.

Tanvi Shah

On June 16, Tanvi Shah joined the IPA as Chief DEI Officer. In this role, she will oversee the new and growing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Bureau. Tanvi previously served as Director of Capacity Building at the Chicago Jobs Council. Tanvi's knowledge of workforce development will be central to the IPA's work in ensuring that the clean energy economy grows in a diverse and equitable manner.



Nicolet Joseph

On July 17, Nicolet Joseph joined the IPA as Senior Accountant. In this role, Nicolet will reconcile accounts, prepare financial reports, and analyze transactions, among other duties. Nicolet previously worked as Controller at private accounting firm Danfoss.



IPA Welcomes New Fellows

The IPA welcomes four new fellows to the second cohort of the IPA fellowship program. Yining Wang joins the IPA from the University of Chicago, where she earned a master's degree in public policy. Jackson Omushien and Oyinoluwakansola Agunbiade both join from Illinois State University, where they recently earned master's degrees in economics. Adrienne Clewis joins from the Department of Energy's (DOE) ORISE program for a two-year

fellowship tasked with supporting the implementation of the DOE's Low-Income Community Solar Connector in Illinois.



Yining Wang, IPA Fellow



Jackson Omushien, IPA Fellow



Oyinoluwakansola Agunbiade,
IPA Fellow



Adrienne Clewis, DOE Fellow

Register for Upcoming Power Hour Webinar

The graphic features the IPA logo (a sun with a lightbulb inside) and the text "ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY PRESENTS". Below this, it says "IPA Power Hour 7: Bring Solar to School—Benefits, Challenges, and Opportunities". At the bottom left is a calendar icon with "Aug 31" below it. To the right is a circular image showing a green and yellow backpack with a calculator and pencils inside, and a chalkboard with a sun drawing in the background.

IPA Power Hour 7:

Bring Solar to School: Benefits, Challenges, and Opportunities

Please join the IPA on **Thursday, August 31 at 12:00pm CT** for *Bring Solar to School—Benefits, Challenges, and Opportunities*.

Speakers for the webinar include Senior Program Manager Audrey Steinbach for Illinois Shines; Matt Seaton, Chief Financial Officer, Illinois State Board of Education; Gabriela Martin, Program Director (Energy), Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation; and Mia Korinke, Campaign Mobilization Director, Climate Jobs IL.

During the webinar, speakers will highlight how public schools (K-12) can take advantage of state solar incentives to install solar. In addition, the speakers will discuss challenges that schools face to go solar, as well as highlight opportunities and best practices for solar adoption.

Thursday, August 31
12:00pm-1:00pm CT

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